DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 412 456 CG 028 089

AUTHOR Gariglietti, Kelli P.; McDermott, Diane; Gingerich, Karen; Hastings, Sarah

TITLE Hope and Its Relationship to Self-Efficacy in Adolescent Girls.

PUB DATE 1997-00-00

NOTE 18p.

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Adolescent Development; Adolescents; Catholic Schools; *Females; Intermediate Grades; Preadolescents; Public Schools; Secondary Education; *Self Efficacy; *Sex Differences; Social Development

IDENTIFIERS *Hope

ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a critical time for the development of self-identity; a time which often changes enthusiastic and assertive 8- and 9-year-old girls into 11- and 12-year-old girls with poor self-images and little faith in their abilities. To better understand this process, this study investigated the relationship between hope and general self-efficacy (GSE) as a function of age and gender in adolescents. The sample consisted of a cross-sectional group of 464 girls and boys, grades 6 through 12, from both Catholic schools and public schools in two large Midwestern communities. Instruments consisted of a demographic information form, the Children's Hope Scale, and the Self-Efficacy Scale. In general, the results support the hypothesis that hope and GSE are significantly related and that hope declines in adolescence for girls. Due to limitations in this study, further investigation into the variables of hope and GSE may be more helpful in revealing which factors help individuals persevere in the adolescent years. Contains 26 references and 4 tables. (RJM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 412 456

Running head: HOPE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SELF-EFFICACY

Hope and its Relationship to Self-Efficacy in Adolescent Girls

Kelli P. Gariglietti

Diane McDermott

Karen Gingerich

Sarah Hastings

University of Kansas

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. McDermott

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CG028089

Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between hope and general self-efficacy (GSE), as a function of age and gender in adolescents. Results revealed that hope and GSE share roughly 38% of their variability. The study failed to reveal a significant gender x age interaction for the GSE variable in adolescent females and males. There was a significant gender x age interaction for hope, but the overall model (age, gender, and gender x age) only explained 2% of the variance in the hope variable. Further investigation into the variables of hope and GSE may help enlighten society as to which factors help individuals persevere in the adolescent years.

Hope and its Relationship to Self-Efficacy in Adolescent Girls

As adolescent girls continue to underactualize their potential and settle for less challenging courses of study and less rewarding careers, it becomes increasingly important to investigate variables which may prevent girls from growing into women who can make their fullest contributions to society. Parents and teachers often describe elementary-age girls as confident, assertive and agentic. However, adolescence, the period of transition from childhood to adulthood, is a critical time for the development of self-identity which often changes enthusiastic and assertive eight and nine year-old girls into eleven and twelve year-old girls with poor self-images, constrained views of their futures, and decreased confidence in their abilities.

Despite the exceptional changes in the role of women over the years, there is evidence that the socialization of teenage girls involves the acceptance of the main burden for household responsibilities, as girls do much more housework than boys (Kelly, 1982), even when they are students preparing for higher education and future careers (McEwen, Curry, & Watson, 1986).Thus far, research has turned to self-esteem to shed light on the disturbing reality of adolescent females' underachievement. A nationwide survey commissioned by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) found that self-esteem plummets for both boys and girls during the beginning adolescent years, but that this nose dive is more than three times as great for girls as compared to the boys (Greenberg Lake Analysis Group & AAUW, 1991). Further, even for girls of great intellectual promise, the gap between their career achievements and those of their male peers widens throughout their lifetimes, and even gifted women continue to fail to realize their full potential as their achievement and aspirations decline throughout

adulthood (Card, Steele, & Abeles, 1980; Kerr, 1985, 1995). Far too many girls lose their confidence and high aspirations, which leads to underachievement and limited job opportunities.

Many feminist writers have proposed that girls, who in pre-adolescence are efficacious, lose a degree of their self-efficacy as they enter adolescence (Bardwick, 1979; Sturdivant, 1980; Horner, 1972; Hackett & Betz, 1989). As earlier noted, self-esteem which is a component of self-efficacy (Betz & Hackett, 1981), shows a precipitous decline in girls compared to that of boys during adolescence (Greenberg Lake Analysis Group & AAUW, 1991). It has been suggested that this decline occurs primarily because of the "culture of romance" which discourages achievement (Holland & Eisenhart, 1989). Other arguments propose that society either does not encourage or actively discourages women and girls from engaging in a variety of activities that serve to increase and strengthen expectations of personal efficacy (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Sherman, 1971, 1976). For example, women's continued failure to fully utilize their individual capabilities and talents (Farmer, 1986) and their continuing underrepresentation in many professions, are postulated to be at least partially due to low or weak self-efficacy expectations with regard to behaviors required for the successful pursuit and performance of those occupations.

Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, and Rogers (1982) cited evidence that an individual's past experiences with success and failure, in a variety of situations, result in a general set of expectations that he/she then carries into new situations referred to as general self-efficacy (GSE). These personal mastery experiences enhance self-efficacy only if the individual attributes these successes to skill (internal orientation) and not to chance (external orientation) (Bandura, 1977). Individuals with high self-efficacy expectations are more likely to attempt new behaviors, persist in them, meet with success, and thereby increase their self-efficacy expectations. For instance, results of one study indicated significant and consistent sex differences in self-

efficacy with regard to traditional versus nontraditional (for females) occupations. Further, self-efficacy expectations were related to both the type and number of occupations considered and to expressed interest in traditional and nontraditional occupations (Betz & Hackett, 1981).

In a related vein, Snyder (1994a) proposed that as girls enter adolescence, the variable of hope which allows a person to establish goals, work energetically toward their fulfillment, and overcome obstacles, may also tend to decline. This decline is apparent in some girls as they become trapped in a downward cycle of social comparison which leaves them feeling inferior to society's idealized standards. The reason for this decline would be similar to that for self-efficacy, but would reflect a more pervasive sense of defeat, since self-efficacy contributes to hope, but is not identical.

There has been a historical controversy as to whether self-efficacy should be conceptualized as a situation-specific state or as a general traitlike state (Eden, 1988). Bandura (1986) argued that SSE is preferable because self-efficacy pertains to specific performances and varies from task to task. Whereas, Snyder et al. (1989) argues that in situations involving generalized expectancies, a generalized expectancy model such as hope is likely to be a better predictor of behavior than a specific expectancy model. The authors of this paper would add that GSE as opposed to SSE is also a generalized expectancy model (Sherer et al., 1982), and are attempting to investigate GSE along with hope in female adolescents.

For the purposes of this study, GSE refers to a general set of expectations which forms from past experiences with success and failure (Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, 1982). Further, hope is comprised of a goal, agency, and pathway and allows a person to establish goals, work energetically toward their fulfillment, and find different ways around obstacles that may occur on the path toward the achievement of those goals (Snyder,

1994a). This investigation seeks to: (a) determine whether the relationship between GSE and hope is significantly correlated in a positive direction for adolescents, (b) assess whether there are differences in the levels of GSE and hope for adolescent females and males, and (c) examine whether levels of hope and GSE decline during the adolescent years.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of a cross-sectional group of 464 girls and boys, grades six through 12, from both Catholic schools and public schools in two large Midwestern communities. Grades six though twelve were chosen based on research which purports that around the transition from elementary school to middle school, adolescents begin to lose confidence in their abilities and future dreams (Greenberg Lake Analysis Group & AAUW, 1991).

Instruments

Instruments consisted of a demographic information form, the Children's Hope Scale (CHS; Snyder et al, 1994b), and the Self-Efficacy Scale (SES; Sherer et al., 1982).

On the demographic information form, subjects were asked to reveal their school's name, teacher's name, grade level, age, and family composition.

The 23-item SES (Sherer et al., 1982) was developed to measure GSE expectancies dependent on past experiences and on tendencies to attribute success to skill as opposed to chance. Students indicated their level of agreement with the items on a Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). GSE was calculated as the sum of responses in the keyed direction to questions on the scale. Psychometric properties and evidence for the original scale's construct validity have been confirmed in previous studies (Sherer et al., 1982; Sherer & Adams, 1985; Tipton & Worthington, 1984).

The CHS is a six-item scale which measure levels of hope in children. The scale consists of two subscales: agency and pathways. The total hope score was calculated by adding responses to each of the six items. The agency score was calculated by adding the odd-numbered items, and that pathway score by adding the even-numbered items. Subjects indicated their level of agreement with the items on a Likert scale that ranged from (1) none of the time to (6) all of the time. Psychometric properties and evidence for the scale's construct validity are available (Snyder et al., 1994b).

Procedure

Permission was granted by the school systems to measure the young people on these variables as part of a larger descriptive study of hope. Researchers administered the measures in regular classroom settings to groups of 20 to 30 subjects with the help of cooperating teachers in both Catholic parochial schools and public schools.

Results

Data from 399 adolescents, ages eleven through nineteen, were used in the data analysis. Of these 399, 186 were males and 213 were females. The mean age for the group was 14.30 years.

Chronbach's alpha was calculated as a measure of internal consistency for the CHS and the SES. For the CHS, a Chronbach's alpha value of .82 was obtained, and the agency and pathways subscales had alphas values of .73 and .72. The SES had a Chronbach's alpha value of .84. All of the items were used in the data analysis from the SES except one item with a corrected item total correlation of .10, which was much lower than the other items. Thus, the item was dropped from further analysis.

In order to combine the data from Catholic and public schools, t-tests for equality of means were calculated for both scales. With an alpha level of .05, there were no significant differences between the two types of schools for the SES, $t = 1.96$, $p = .051$, the CHS, $t = .17$, $p = .87$, or for the subscales on the CHS, $t = 1.41$, $p = .16$ (agency) and $t = 1.09$, $p = .28$ (pathways). Therefore, the data from Catholic schools and public schools were combined into one sample.

To investigate the relationship between hope and GSE, three correlation coefficients were calculated (total CHS and GSE, agency from the CHS and GSE, and pathways from the CHS and GSE). Results revealed a significant correlation between the SES and the CHS, $r = .62$, $p < .001$. Therefore, the two scales shared roughly 38% of their variability. Significant correlations were also found between the SES and the agency subscale of hope, $r = .56$, $p < .001$, and the SES and the pathways subscale of hope, $r = .57$, $p < .001$.

To determine whether the variables of hope and GSE decline in adolescence and whether this decline is greater for females, multiple regression analyses were calculated using either GSE or hope as the criterion variable, and age, gender, and gender x age as the predictor variables.

There was not a significant gender x age interaction for the SES, $F_{chg} = .81$, $p = .37$. While the three predictors (age, gender, and gender x age) did not explain a significant proportion of the variance in the GSE variable ($R^2 = .01$; $F(3, 395) = 1.58$, $p = .19$), the age main effect approached significance, $F_{chg} = 3.74$, $p = .054$ (see Figure 1).

Insert Figure 1. About Here

There were significant gender x age interactions for the CHS, $F_{chs} = 5.72$, $p = .02$, and both the agency and pathways subcomponents of hope, $F_{chs} = 4.14$, $p = .04$ and $F_{chs} = 5.26$, $p = .02$ (see Figure 2, 3, & 4). In addition, the model (age, gender, and gender x age) was significant for the CHS and its agency subscale, $F(3, 395) = 2.73$, $p = .04$ and $F(3, 395) = 3.03$, $p = .03$. However, in both cases the model only serves to explain 2% of the variance ($R^2 = .02$). The model was not significant for the pathways subscale, $R^2 = .02$, $F = 2.35$, $p = .07$.

Insert Figure 2, 3, & 4 About Here

Discussion

In general, the results support that hope and GSE are significantly related and that hope declines in adolescence for girls. Despite the significance of the overall model (age, gender, and gender x age) for the CHS, it only serves to explain 2% of the variance in the hope variable. Therefore, it is important to interpret this finding with caution. The remaining variance might be due to other factors such as error, locus of control, influence from family and peers, etc.

The results did not substantiate the hypothesis that GSE declines in adolescence, and more so for girls as compared to boys. However, a near significant age main effect suggests that both genders tend to decline in GSE during adolescence.

The significant age x gender interaction for hope parallels earlier studies of self-esteem in adolescents (Greenberg Lake Analysis Group & AAUW, 1991). The question at hand is what leads to this significant age x gender interaction for hope but not GSE. To answer this question, one might examine the limitations of this study.

One limitation is that the study is cross-sectional. Thus, conclusions about the development of GSE and hope are not warranted, although developmental hypotheses may be generated on the basis of the reported findings. Second, perhaps the measure of self-efficacy used in this study lacks age-specificity in that it may not involve areas of functioning in which self-efficacy is specifically important to adolescents. The construction of an adolescent-specific measure of self-efficacy would address this problem (Ehrenberg, Cox, & Koopman, 1991). Third, this study was limited to a fairly homogenous, middle to working-class sample of students in the Midwest. Therefore, care must be taken in generalizing current findings to other populations of adolescents.

In order to confirm these findings, researchers should replicate this study with a larger, more diverse sample of students from different areas of the nation. The possible decline of GSE in adolescence needs to be ruled out by replicating this study with a more age-appropriate measure. Finally, investigation into why males show less decline in hope may identify factors which enhance the understanding of this study.

As the turbulent years of adolescence can be grueling for both parents and children, further investigation into levels of hope and GSE may help enlighten society as to why some individuals persist longer in the perils of adolescence and come out with less scrapes and bruises than others who are swallowed by the torrential winds.

References

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. Psychological Review, 84, 191-215.

Bandura, A. (1986). Social foundations of thought and action: A social-cognitive view. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bardwick, J. M. (1979). Psychology of Women. New York: Harper.

Betz, N. E., & Hackett, G. (1981). The relationship of career-related self-efficacy expectations to perceived career options in college women and men. Journal of counseling Psychology, 28, 399-410.

Card, J. J., Steele, L., & Abeles, R. P. (1980). Sex differences in realization of individual potential for achievement. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 17, 1-20.

Eden, D. (1988). Pygmalion, goal setting, and expectancy: compatible ways to raise productivity. Academy of Management Review, 13, 639-652.

Ehrenberg, M. F., Cox, D. N., & Koopman, R. F. (1991). The relationship between self-efficacy and depression in adolescents. Adolescence, 26, 361-374.

Farmer, H. S. (1986). What inhibits achievement and career motivation in women? The Counseling Psychologist, 6, 12-14.

Greenberg Lake Analysis Group & American Association for University Women. (1991). Shortchanging girls, short changing America. Washington, DC: AAUW.

Hackett, G. & Betz, N. E. (1989). An exploration of the mathematics self-efficacy/mathematics performance correspondence. Journal of Research in Mathematics Education, 20, 261-273.

Holland, D. C., & Eisenhart, M. A. (1989). Educated in romance: Women, achievement and college culture. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Horner, M. S. (1972). Towards an understanding of achievement-related conflicts in women. Journal of Social Issues, 28, 157-175.

Kelly, A. (1982). Gender roles at home and school. British Journal of Sociology of Education, 3, 281-295.

Kerr, B. A. (1985). Smart girls, gifted women. Columbus, OH: Ohio Psychology.

Kerr, B. A. (1995). Smart girls two: A new psychology of girls, women, and giftedness. Scottsdale, AZ: Gifted Psychology Press.

Maccoby, E. E., & Jacklin, C. N. (1974). The psychology of sex differences. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

McEwen, A., Curry, C. A., & Watson, J. (1986). Subject performances at A-level in Northern Ireland. European Journal of Science Education, 8, 39-50.

Sherer, M., Maddux, J. E., Mercandante, B., Prentice-Dunn, S., Jacobs, B., & Rogers, R. W. (1982). The self-efficacy scale: construction and validation. Psychological Reports, 51, 663-671.

Sherer, M., & Adams, C. H. (1985). Construct validation of the Self-efficacy Scale. Psychological Reports, 53, 899-902.

Sherman, J. A. (1971). On the psychology of women: A survey of empirical studies. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Sherman, J. (1976). Social values, femininity, and the development of female competence. Journal of Social Issues, 32, 181-195.

Snyder, C. R. (1994a). The psychology of hope: You can get there from here. New York: Free Press.

Snyder, C. R., Harris, C. B., Anderson, J. R., Gibb, J., Yoshinobu, L., Langelle, C., Harney, P., Holleran, S., & Irving, L. M. (1989). The development and validation of an individual differences measure of hope. Paper presented at the American Psychological Association Convention, New Orleans, August.

Snyder, C. R., Hoza, B., Pelham, W. E., Rapoff, M., Ware, L., Danovsky, M., Highberger, L., Hinton-Nelson, M., Rubinstein, H., & Stahl, K. J. (1994b). Development and validation of the Children's Hope Scale. Paper presented at the American Psychological Association Convention, New York, August.

Sturdivant, S. (1980). Therapy with women. New York: Springer.

Tipton, R. M. & Worthington, E. L. (1984). The measurement of generalized self-efficacy: a study of construct validity. Journal of Personality Assessment, 48, 545-548.

Figure 1. Age main effect of GSE which approached significance.

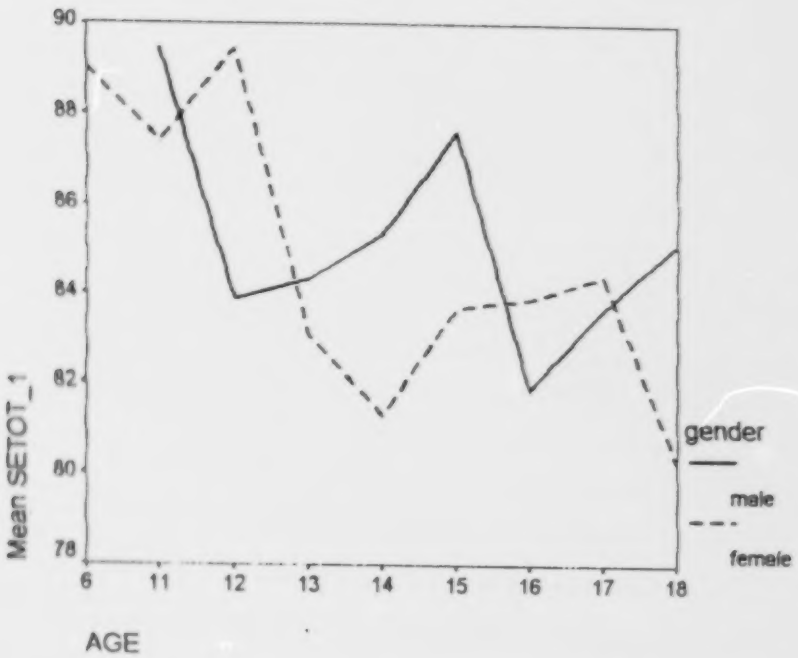

Figure 2. Significant gender x age interaction for the total hope score.

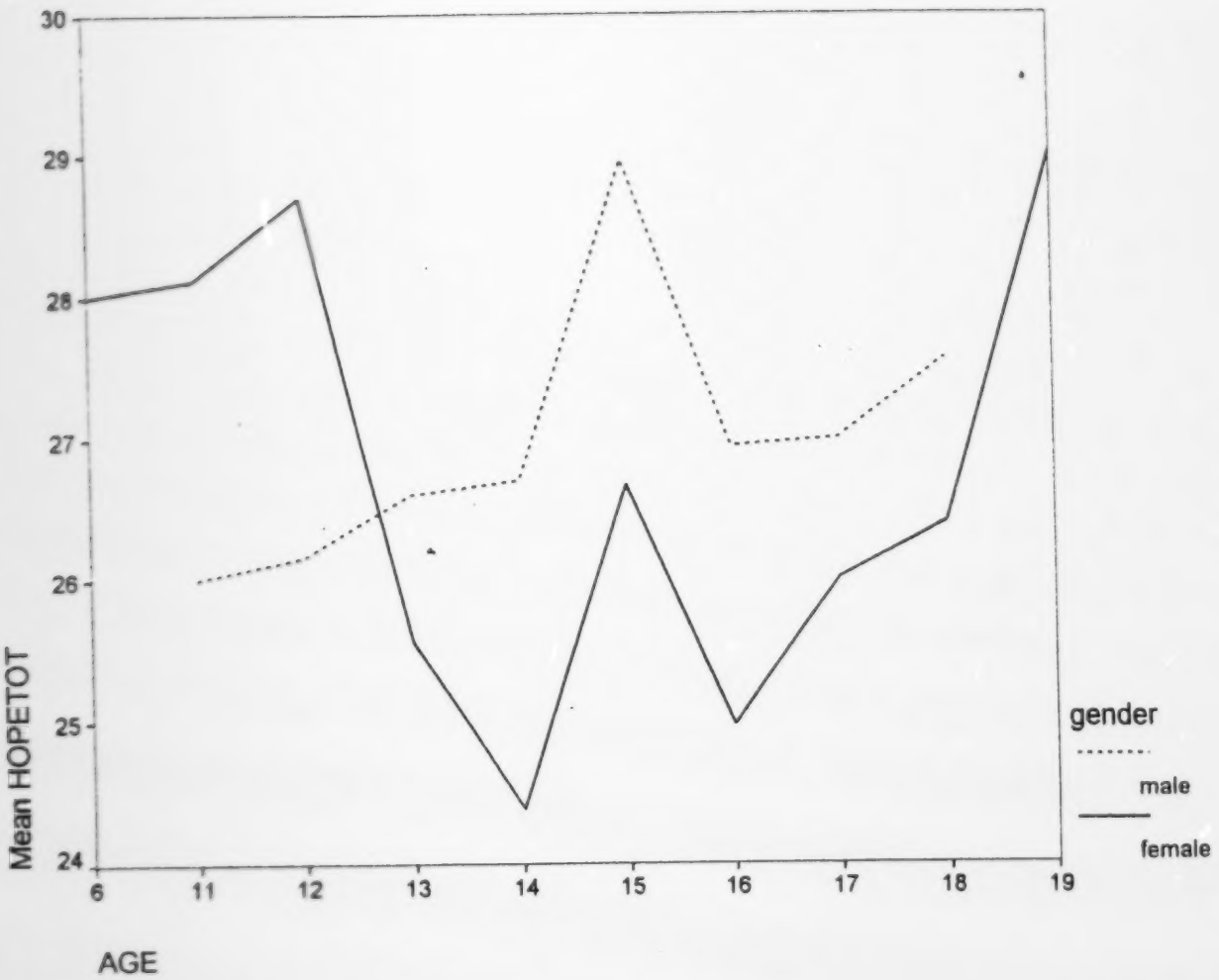

Figure 3. Significant gender x age interaction for the agency subcomponent of hope.

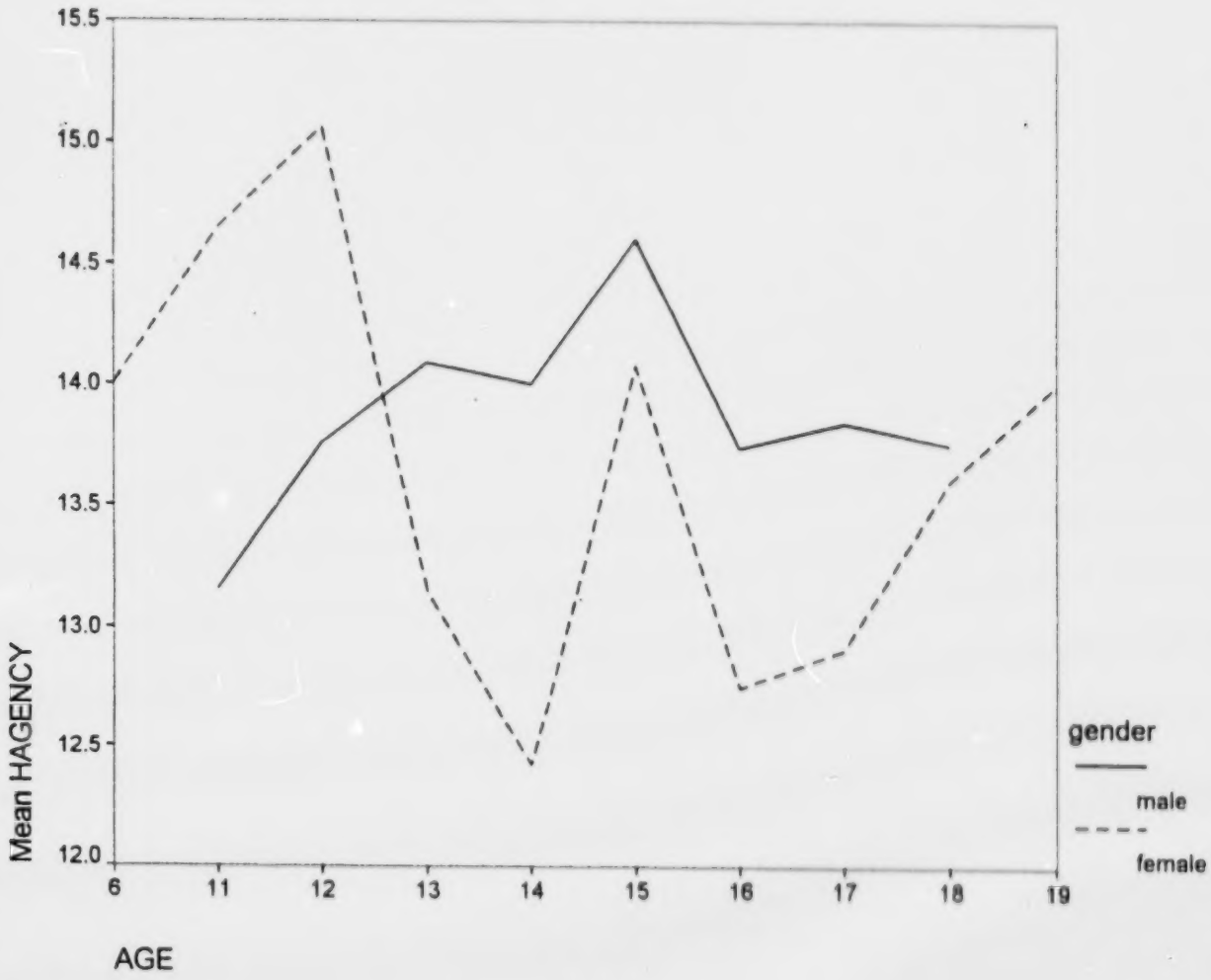

Figure 4. Significant gender x age interaction for the pathways subcomponent of hope.